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TAGS: SOPN PFOR KS US
SUBJ: KOREAN PRESS COVERS PAK TONG-SON AFFAIR
REF: SEOUL 9223 (DTG 010736Z NOV 77)

SUMMARY: AFTERNOON KOREAN PRESS FOR NOVEMBER 1 CONTINUE HEAVY COVERAGE OF FONMIN-AMBASSADOR MEETING OF 10/31. FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENT ARGUES AGAINST ANY LINK BETWEEN PAK CASE AND ROK SECURITY AND EXPRESSES HOPE FOR SPEEDY SOLUTION. ONE ARTICLE 11/2 QUOTES WASHINGTON REPORTS THAT ROKG INITIATIVE INVOLVES A THIRD COUNTRY. END SUMMARY.

1. ON NOVEMBER 1, AFTERNOON VERNACULAR DAILIES UNIFORMLY GAVE FRONT-PAGE, SECOND COVERAGE TO 10/31 MEETING BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER PAK TONG-JIN AND AMBASSADOR, WITH BRIEF COMMENTARIES. FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENT ON KOREAN DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE APPEARED, EXPRESSING FEAR LEST SOLUTION OF PAK TONG-SON CASE BE MADE A CONDITION FOR COMPENSATORY

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MEASURES FOR TROOP WITHDRAWAL. OTHER FRONT-PAGE ARTICLES REPORTED U.S. HOUSE'S UNANIMOUS PASSAGE OF RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ROKG'S FULL COOPERATION IN PAK CASE, AND DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN CARTER'S STATEMENT THAT USG IS EXAMINING NEW ROKG PROPOSALS.

2. IN COMMENTARIES, SEMI-OFFICIAL KYONGHYANG SINMUN JUDGED THAT ROKG PROPOSAL WAS DESIGNED TO EASE ROK-U.S. TENSIONS, BUT MINOR SINA ILBO SPECULATED FONMIN HAD PROPOSED A LOCATION WHERE U.S. WOULD INQUIRE AS TO PAK TONG-SON'S INTENTIONS TO LEAVE KOREA FOR USG QUESTIONING, AND IMPORTANT CHUNGANG ILBO SPECULATED KOREA MIGHT YIELD ON EITHER (A) U.S. TALKING WITH PAK AT U.S. EMBASSY, OR (B) INVESTIGATING HIM IN A THIRD COUNTRY. LATTER COMMENTARY IN CHUNGANG, POINTING OUT THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD CONCLUDED THAT ONE OR BOTH SIDES WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT AN UNCOMFORTABLE BURDEN IN ORDER TO FIND A COMPROMISE, WENT ON TO SPECULATE THAT U.S. WOULD HAVE NO GROUNDS FOR REFUSING ROK'S SUGGESTION "IF IT IS A METHOD (THE U.S.)

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LEGAL SYSTEM CAN ACCEPT AS PROOF".
3. TWO EDITORIALS APPEARED NOVEMBER 1 ON SUBJECT, WORRYING MOST THAT U.S. MIGHT CONNECT PAK CASE WITH LARGER ISSUE OF KOREAN SECURITY. MINOR SINA ILBO ARGUED AGAINST ANY SUCH LINK, POINTING TO BASIS OF U.S. CONCEPT OF KOREAN SECURITY IN U.S. WORLD SP
ATEGY AND
TO IDEA THAT CONTINUED
DISCORD WOULD PROFIT ONLY NORTH KOREA. IMPORTANT CHUNGANG ILBO'S EDITORIAL ATTACKED ATTITUDE OF U.S. CONGRESS AND ITS TIMING IN PASSING RESOLUTION JUST WHEN KOREA HAS UNDERTAKEN AN INITIATIVE FURTHER EXTENDING ITS ALREADY UNUSUALLY SINCERE AND FORTH-

COMING WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE. STATING THAT U.S. INVESTIGATION OF PAK IS IN PRINCIPLE TOO MUCH TO EXPECT, WRITERS CALL U.S. RESOLUTION "HIGH-PRESSURE" AND POINT OUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO AVOID SUSPICION OF LINKAGE BETWEEN PAK CASE AND ARMS TRANSFER BILL, AT TIME LATTER IS PENDING. WRITERS CONCLUDE WITH HOPE DELAY IN PAK CASE WILL NEVER DAMAGE ROK-U.S. RELATIONS OR INFLUENCE KOREAN SECURITY AND CALL FOR SINCERE EFFORTS, ON BOTH SIDES, TO FIND A QUICK COMPROMISE.
4. FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE IN NOVEMBER 2 MORNING PAPERS CONCENTRATES ON PASSAGE OF HOUSE RESOLUTION, WITH SMALL ARTICLES ON SPOKESMAN CARTER'S STATEMENT USG IS CONSIDERING ROKG PLAN AND ONE ARTICLE QUOTING ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL ON 10/31 TO EFFECT ROKG MAY CHANGE ITS ATTITUDE. HAN'GUK ILBO'S CHO SUN-HWAN, NOTING THAT CONTENTS OF ROKG PROPOSAL HAVE NOT BEEN RELEASED, NEVERTHELESS QUOTES WASHINGTON POST AND STAR AS SAYING ROKG PLAN PROPOSES U.S. JUSTICE OFFICIALS QUESTION PAK IN A "NEUTRAL COUNTRY".
5. IN MAJOR INSIDE PAGE COMMENTARY 11/2 ENTITLED "COMPLETELY UNJUST" SONU HWI, EDITOR IN CHIEF OF CHOSON ILBO, STRONGLY ATTACKS IDEA THAT RESOLUTION OF PAK TONG-SON CASE MIGHT BE MADE CONDITION FOR MEASURES COMPENSATORY FOR TROOP WITHDRAWAL. SONU STATES THAT COMPENSATORY MEASURES ARE QUESTION OF VERY SURVIVAL OF KOREA AND ITS 35 MILLION PEOPLE AND REPRESENT THE MINIMUM U.S. RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD KOREA. TOSINK THE TWO WOULD BE LIKE YOUNG CHILDREN FIGHTING OVER CHOCOLATES AND IS BENEATH THE DIGNITY OF THE U.S. AND ITS CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS. SONU ALSO CALLS ON BOTH COUNTRIESDTO HANDLE CAREFULLY THE QUESTIONING OF PAK, EXPRESSING DOUBT THAT PAK WOULD TESTIFY TRUTHFULLY IN ATMOSPHERE IN U.S., POSSIBLY SUBJECTING SOME U.S. POLITICIANS AND OTHERS TO "UNEXPECTED CALAMITY". AFTER A STRONG CALL FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN DEFENDING KOREA, SONU CONCLUDES WITH PLEA

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U.S. DECIDE ON COMPENSATORY MEASURES SIMPLY ON BASIS OF ARITHMETIC: 35 MILLION PEOPLE VERSUS ONLY A FEW.
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